

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01

AID-05 PC-01 /079 W

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O R 121600Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7415

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAO PAULO 0081

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT BR

SUBJ: MORE INFORMATION ON COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRASIL (PC DO B)

PRISONERS

REF: A BRASILIA 10498, B SAO PAULO 2996

SUMMARY: FEDERAL DEPUTY AIRTON SOARES (MDB-SAO PAULO), WHO IS PARTNER IN LAW FIRM WHICH IS DEFENDING TWO PC DO B MEMBERS CAPTURED IN RAID ON CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING ON DECEMBER 16 (REFTEL A), CLAIMED THAT PRISONERS WERE TORTURED BY ARMY IN RIO, AND BY POLICE IN SAO PAULO. HE ALSO CLAIMS THAT TWO OF THE PC DE B MEMBERS AT THE MEETING ARE MISSING. POLICE TOLD LAWYERS THEY HAVE DISAPPEARED. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPUTY AIRTON SOARES TOLD CONGEN POLOFF THAT HIS LAW FIRM REPRESENTS ALDO SILVA ARANTES AND HAROLDO BORGES LIMA, MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PC DO B. LAWYERS OF THE FIRM HAVE GAINED ACCESS TO CLIENTS AFTER INITIAL DIFFICULTIES. ARANTES CLAIMED THAT THE HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO ELECTRIC SHOCKS AND PARROT'S PERCH TORTURES. LIMA STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN HELD IN THE "DRAGON CHAIR" -- AN ELECTRIFIED METAL CHAIR -- FOR TEN HOURS. BOTH TORTURES TOOK PLACE WHILE PRISONERS WERE  
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HELD BY FIRST ARMY IN RIO. SINCE RETURN OF PRISONERS TO SAO PAULO ON DECEMBER 26, SOARES SAID THAT PRISONERS ARE BEING HELD BY DOPS SECTION OF POLICE, BUT MOST OF THE QUESTIONING IS CARRIED OUT AT SECOND ARMY DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL OPERATIONS (DOI). SOARES SAID THAT PRISONERS TOLD HIS LAW PARTNER THAT THEY ARE BEING TORTURED BY BLOWS TO THE HEAD WHILE THEY ARE AT DOPS. NO TORTURE WAS REPORTED BY

ARMY. (AFTER INITIAL CONTACT WITH ARANTES, SOARES HAD REPORTED THAT TORTURE WAS BEING ADMINISTERED AT SECOND ARMY DOI. SUBSEQUENTLY, HE CHECKED WITH THE PRISONERS AND CORRECTED HIS ACCOUNT.)

2. SOARES STATED THAT THE AND OTHER LAWYERS FEEL THAT GOVERNMENT HAS IMPROVED ITS PUBLIC RELATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE HANDLING OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, BUT HAS NOT CHANGED ITS METHODS. SOARES SAID HE FELT LAWYERS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE "BEING HAD" AND WOULD LIKE TO ISSUE WRITTEN STATEMENT TO PRESS DENOUNCING TORTURE OF PC DO B PRISONERS AND DEMANDING THAT THEY BE GRANTED AN OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE A JUDGE TO REVEAL PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF TORTURE AND EXPLAIN THEIR TREATMENT.

3. SOARES IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT DENOUNCING PUBLICLY TORTURE BY GOVERNMENT. HE SAID HE IS RECEIVING THREATS OF CASSATION. HOWEVER, HE FEELS THAT SINCE THE GOVERNMENT HAS USED PRESS EFFECTIVELY TO "TRANQUILIZE POPULATION" ABOUT THE HANDLING OF PRISONERS, LAWYERS FEEL JUSTIFIED IN PRESENTING THE PRISONERS' SIDE OF THE CASE THROUGH PRESS. LAWYERS HAVE PUT THIS DECISION TO THEIR CLIENTS, WHO MUST WEIGH WHETHER GOING PUBLIC WILL INCREASE OR DECREASE THEIR JEOPARDY.

4. SOARES STATED THAT THERE WERE 11 PC AND B MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING. NINE HAVE BEEN ACCOUNTED FOR. CONTRARY TO HIS PREVIOUS INFORMATION (BRASLIA 10498), JOAO AMAZONAS AND RENATO REBELLO WERE NOT PRESENT. THE TWO NOT ACCOUNTED FOR ARE JOVER TELLES, CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER FOR MINAS GERAIS, WHOM SOARES DESCRIBED AS A MEMBER OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PCB SINCE 1941 AND ONE OF FOUNDERS OF PC DO B IN 1962. OTHER IS JORGE NOVAIS, REPRESENTATIVE FROM ALAGOAS. ARANTES HAD INFORMED LAWYERS THAT PARTICIPANTS LEFT MEETING IN THREE GROUPS. JOAO BAPTISTA DRUMMOND HAD LEFT MEETING IN FIRST GROUP (ARMY STATED DRUMMOND WAS VICTIM OF AUTO ACCIDENT SOME HOURS AFTER POLICE RAID ON PC DO B HEADQUARTERS. IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT HE DIED WHILE UNDERGOING INTERROGATION) TELLES AND NOVAIS AHD LEFT AT MIDNIGHT. POLICE HAVE TOLD LAWYERS THAT THEY FOLLOWED PERSONS AS THEY LEFT THE MEETING, BUT LOST TRACK OF TELLES AND NOVAIS.

5. COMMENT: WITH RESPECT TO MISSING TWO MEMBERS, THERE IS A SUSPICION THAT ARMY INTELLIGENCE MIGHT HAVE HAD AN INFORMER ON PC DO B CENTRAL COMMITTEE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ONE OF "MISSING" MEMBERS IS INFORMER AND THE OTHER SERVING AS HIS COVER.

6. IN SPITE OF THE MANY UNEXPLAINED HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS OF THE PC DO B CASE, THE GOVERNMENT IS ACTING MUCH MORE CAUTIOUSLY

IN ITS TREATMENT OF THE PRISONERS THAN IT DID IN THE PAST. ONE  
BAROMETER OF THE PRISONERS' TREATMENT IS WHETHER  
THEY PROTEST THEIR TREATMENT PUBLICLY. THE PRESS STATEMENT,  
ACCORDING TO SOARES, HAS BEEN READY SINCE JANUARY 5. IT HAS  
NOT BEEN RELEASED BECAUSE THE PRISONERS APPARENTLY FEEL  
THEIR TREATMENT IS NOT INTOLERABLE. ANOTHER FACTOR  
WHICH PROBABLY CONTRIBUTES TO ALLEVIATING THE TREATMENT OF THE  
PRISONERS IS THAT THE ARMY REPORTEDLY GATHERED TWO TRUCKLOADS  
OF PC DO B DOCUMENTS FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS  
AND FROM THE HOMES OF MEMBERS. THESE DOCUMENTS  
REPORTEDLY CONTAIN NEARLY ALL THE INFORMATION THE  
GOVERNMENT WANTS ABOUT THE PARTY; THE DETAINEES  
MERELY CLAIRIFY DETAILS.

7. EMBASSY CONRUS.  
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## Message Attributes

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